

Types or Genres of Literature

Short Stories	Autobiographies	Plays	Histories
Novels	Sermons	Editorials	Hymns
Biographies	Diaries & Letters	Poems	Essays

Elements of Literature

Character	Structure / Plot	Moral Tone
Point of View	Conflict	Worldview of the Author
Setting	Theme	

Importance of Worldview in Studying Literature

The worldview of an author is the sum-total of what the author believes about TRUTH and the meaning of life.

One-Way Communication of Author to Reader



When you read, it is important to be an ACTIVE reader!

An active reader is one who is on the habit of ASKING QUESTIONS while he or she reads.

American Literature is relatively very NEW.

The first phase of American Literature is called EARLY AMERICAN Literature and the first three chapters of our text cover this phase which lasted about 200 years.

- The PURITAN view of life is evident in the Early American writings.
- The PURITANS wanted to purify the Church of England from its corrupt practices.
- The SEPARATISTS felt the only way to be free from the corrupt practices of the Church of England was to separate completely.
- The Pilgrims who came on the Mayflower were SEPARATISTS who shared the belief system of the Puritans.

Main Puritan Themes:

- (1) They believed in DUTY first and then pleasure.
- (2) They believed in hard work - a strong WORK ETHIC.
- (3) They believed that every aspect of one's life should be lived in OBEDIENCE to God.
- (4) They had a well-established THEOLOGY based on Calvinism
- (5) They were very GOAL-oriented.
- (6) They believed that AMERICA was to be a leader in the world.
- (7) They wanted to establish government as a THEOCRACY where God was the ruler, and so they based their laws on Leviticus.
- (8) They believed in living to SERVE God and others.
- (9) They saw God's hand in all details of life.

American writers were affected by Three Major Changes occurring during this time:

- (1) Population of the country was constantly expanding and changing from "IMMIGRANT" to distinctively "AMERICAN".
- (2) The principles that governed the decisions made by men in power changed from RELIGIOUS to secular and MATERIALISTIC.
- (3) The political system of the country went from colonial dependence on England to INDEPENDENCE as the United States of America.

Our three authors this week are:

- (1) **Captain John Smith** was one of the men who established **JAMESTOWN Colony** in Virginia.
- (2) **William Byrd** also lived in VIRGINIA and wrote about 100 years after Smith.
- (3) **William Bradford** was one of the Pilgrims who founded **PLYMOUTH Colony** in Massachusetts.

Next week we have the following three authors:

- (4) **John Winthrop** helped establish the **MASSACHUSETTS BAY Colony** near Boston and was in the first group who came as part of the **Great Migration** of 1630-1640.
- (5) **Mary Rowlandson** also lived in Massachusetts Bay Colony and wrote about her experience being CAPTURED by Indians/Native Americans.
- (6) **Samuel Sewell** lived in Massachusetts Bay Colony and wrote the **first anti-slavery tract** known in America.

Captain John Smith

- Captain John Smith's *A General History* (Chapter Two) describes the events that occurred when Smith was captured by the Indians. He was nearly clubbed to death if not for the intervention of Pocahontas, daughter of the Chief Powhatan.
- In a *Description of New England*, Smith discusses his belief that it is a noble pursuit to settle America in order to convert the "poor savages" to a knowledge of God.
- Also in a *Description of New England*, Smith notes that Spanish colonists in the south are converting Indians to their Roman Catholic version of Christianity. As a Protestant, Smith sees Roman Catholicism as a corrupted and false version of Christianity. He sees it as a duty of a good Christian Protestant to convert the Indians to a true knowledge of God.



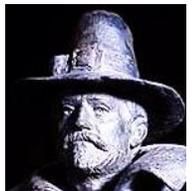
William Byrd II

- The Byrds were one of the First Families of Virginia.
- Byrd's *Secret Diary* was written in a method of shorthand not deciphered until the 1940's.



William Bradford

- Bradford wrote *Of Plymouth Plantation* which described the story of the Separatists we now know as the **Pilgrims**.
- The colonists in Plymouth had read Captain John Smith's *Description of New England*. They used his maps to help them find a location to settle.



MAYFLOWER COMPACT

- Because the Mayflower had accidentally landed out of the jurisdiction of their Virginia patent, some of the non-Separatist travelers (known as "STRANGERS") claimed they no longer had to obey company rules.
- To establish order, the Pilgrims drew up an agreement called The MAYFLOWER COMPACT and asked all adult men to sign it.
- The Mayflower Compact was eventually a cornerstone for the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
 - The authority of the state rests upon the consent of the governed.
 - Political authority is derived from God and not the king.

Plimoth (Plymouth) Colony

- The turning point for the Pilgrims was when they met **English - speaking Indians**, Samoset and Squanto.
- After this, they met with Chief Massasoit and agreed to a treaty with him that lasted **50 years**.
- Both Captain John Smith and Governor William Bradford attribute the success of their colonies to God which demonstrates their Puritan worldview.